#### Gonna Be Around

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/24454714.

Rating: <u>Teen And Up Audiences</u>
Archive Warning: <u>No Archive Warnings Apply</u>

Category: M/M

Fandom: Video Blogging RPF

Relationship: <u>Clay | Dream/GeorgeNotFound (Video Blogging RPF)</u>

Character: Clay | Dream (Video Blogging RPF), Sapnap (Video Blogging RPF),

GeorgeNotFound (Video Blogging RPF)

Additional Tags: realistic minecraft au, (yes again i know), Potions, Bad Ideas

Language: English

Stats: Published: 2020-05-30 Words: 4,603 Chapters: 1/1

# Gonna Be Around

by undermycoat

## Summary

In which Dream and George do not listen to Sapnap, a run-in with a witch goes wrong, and what the heck is *ree-tuh-velo*? (Or is it *reh-too-velo*?)

### **Notes**

the result of revisiting snowbaz fics & trying to get out any and all ooc-ness. apologizing ahead of time for that too bc,,, it's p bad

!! tw !! swearing & blood mention?? ig??? also an unconscious person is kissed

oh also the title is from "take a chance on me" by abba obvs lol ps i forgot to edit this so sorry for any mistakes ok love you bye

See the end of the work for more notes

For all intents and purposes, it *should* be easy. All they have to do is cross a swamp biome to get to the stronghold containing the End portal, and *voila!* They're done. And it is easy, for a time. George ignores the weight-gain of his jeans as the ends of them fill with water, and Dream ignores the tiring of his arm from holding his shield for so long. Sapnap ignores the squelch of his leather boots in the mud. They're fine. It's all easy; it's all good.

And then Dream comes to an abrupt stop, leaving George to run into him, and Sapnap to almost stumble if it weren't for how firmly his feet were in the mud. "What?" George asks, as the trio stare ahead of them. "What is it?"

Dream points a finger directly ahead. "There's a witch's hut over there."

Sapnap sighs. "See, we should've just gone around. Maybe if you two listened to me more often \_\_\_"

"Do you think there's anything in it?" George asks, turning to Dream with wide eyes hidden behind his sunglasses.

Shoving down his irritation at getting cut off, Sapnap crosses his arms over his chest. "Everybody knows there's nothing useful in there, just trouble. So why don't we just keep going, keep our heads down, no one gets hurt, no one gets *killed*—"

"Maybe," Dream says, and with that, the two take off towards the hut, leaving Sapnap to follow, though he finds himself stuck in the mud. With wide eyes, he watches as Dream and George head further into the swamp. Concern inflates like a balloon in his chest, but until he's out of the mud, out of his boots maybe, he's unable to help. His gaze drops to his feet, though he can't even see them, so covered in gunk they are. He's sunken a fair amount, and when he tries to move, he swears he only gets deeper. He gets his hands around a leg and pulls, trying his best to make some progress in getting unstuck.

"Seriously," he grumbles to himself as nothing seems to work, "they really couldn't've thought for one minute. *One* minute. Like, hey, maybe we *shouldn't* go inside the scary witch's house that literally everyone knows only has a little table and mushroom in it? I don't know. Just an idea. But hey! I'm sure that days-old water is great! So refreshing!" He's still muttering to himself, working on getting his other leg free, when he hears the sound of footsteps, and sees Dream running towards him at a near-full sprint. Honestly, forget whatever monsters they've fought. Having Dream running straight at him full-speed might be one of the most terrifying things he's seen.

His shield is obviously banged up now, and it shines with some unknown substance that drips down it and onto the ground below, though some flies off behind Dream while he runs. What is also flying off, apparently, is his mask. Sapnap, out of strange respect (he's really not sure), finds himself looking away from the other's face, however, to instead inspect the rest of his person. He's got red staining his front, and Sapnap is pretty sure some of it spreads onto his back too, from his shoulder. His hands, too, are bloodied, but Sapnap doesn't care when they get a grip around his arms to help pull him the rest of the way out of the mud.

"George," Dream is saying when Sapnap is finally out of the mud, the name choppy with how hard Dream is breathing, "left him, he—"

This is the most panicked Sapnap has ever heard Dream, and he reaches out a hand to steady his friend when the other turns to go back towards the hut and stumbles. When Dream looks back at him, Sapnap accidentally gets a clear look at his face, and it's almost his turn to stumble at the sheer fear on it.

"What happened?" Sapnap asks, brows furrowing, that concern from before back in full, no, doubled, *tripled* now, as Dream falls into an explanation, something about a fight with the witch, it using some kind of potion on George, one Dream's never seen (one Sapnap has *definitely* never seen), then using a basic harming one on Dream, resulting in his current state, Dream having managed to only hurt himself worse when on his way to Sapnap.

"So George is still back at the hut?" Sapnap asks, all caution thrown out the window out of worry for his friend, ready to turn and run into danger himself.

Dream nods. "The witch, it's gone. It—"

"Not an invisibility potion," Sapnap groans, looking back to Dream with wide eyes.

Dream only shakes his head, and Sapnap is ready to sigh in relief, though also that means a witch *still has George*, but then Dream continues: "I killed it."

Dread fills Sapnap whole. "What?"

"I was panicked; I wasn't thinking; I was dumb," Dream looks at Sapnap, one hand with its knuckles turning white from how tight it grips the end of his sword, "we need to go back."

"Uh, yeah," Sapnap agrees, finally deciding to just say *fuck it* and head off in the direction of the witch's hut. "So the witch is really gone?"

Dream makes an affirmative noise from behind him, and Sapnap sighs, continuing on through tall grass and murky water.

When they reach the hut, the sun has started to set, and Sapnap's muscles burn as he pulls himself up onto the porch of the hut. He bites back a wince of sympathy when Dream makes a small noise as he follows, and Sapnap is fully able to see the blood that's begun to stain his shirt down the back. Unable to fight the caring instincts he has, Sapnap kneels down to help Dream get fully on the porch and catch his breath. "Come on, big guy," he says, placing what he hopes is a comforting hand on the other's uninjured shoulder, "we've got a George to save."

He's about to turn and go in when Dream's hand on his wrist stops him. "Wait," Dream gets out, "George is—"

"Are you sure George isn't *dead*?" Sapnap can't help the way his voice pitches as he stares at the eldest's body laid out on the ground, looking definitely worse for the wear, his glasses no longer even on his face, instead lenses-down on the ground next to him.

"He's not dead," Dream says, and this time the voice comes from slightly above Sapnap, so he knows the other has managed to push himself up to stand. "He's breathing."

"Must be pretty barely," Sapnap murmurs, moving to go inspect George. His eyes are shut, and ignoring the rest of his body, bruised and slightly bloody, probably from the fight and him falling to the floor, he almost looks peaceful, expression blank, brows relaxed. "What did that potion do to him, dude?"

There's the sound of scraping and then the hut brightens, making the mottled marks on George's skin more obvious, the lack of color in his face definitely moreso. But it also makes the slight rise and fall of his chest visible too. "Yup," Sapnap says, "still breathing." There's a soft thunk as Dream sets down the lantern on the crafting table before he's coming to sit next to Sapnap.

"There's got to be some notes here or something," he tells the other. "There's no way that potion's been used before. That witch made it, I know it."

Sapnap looks around at the mostly barren room. True to what he thought, it's just got the crafting table and a cauldron, and when he glances to one of the windows, there sits a flower pot with just a single mushroom in it. There doesn't seem to be any secret room, no place to hide any confidential information. It's just an empty hut, its original owner and all their knowledge now gone.

"Okay," Sapnap says more to himself than anyone else, though the only other people there are an unconscious man and a desperate man frantically tugging at rotting wood planks, "this is fine. We can handle this. This is fine."

"Not fine," Dream says, making Sapnap look over at him. "Come on, dude, we need to search for *something*."

Sapnap nods before looking down at George just one more time; his face is still relaxed, his body still awkwardly bent from his fall. Sapnap, for as much as he pokes fun and does his best to annoy the other, doesn't actually dislike him, so he readjusts George, making it to where he's laying there flat on his back, arms over his chest, legs stretched out pointing towards the door, minimizing the possibility of unnecessary soreness.

When Sapnap rises, Dream is paused, staring down at George. "Dude," he says, "don't make him look dead."

"He's going to be more comfortable this way," Sapnap argues. "Have you found anything?"

Dream flashes him his empty palms, and Sapnap grits his teeth, joining the other in the search. When he can't find anything either, Sapnap glances up only to see Dream looking over at George. His mask, which had fallen off completely some time on their way back to the hut, Sapnap spies shoved haphazardly into his pocket, as if Dream couldn't be bothered to put it back on, as if he couldn't care less if it were to fall out either. This is the most open Sapnap has seen Dream, and he's not sure he likes it.

Considering their friend is lying unconscious on the floor, the pair of them with zero certainty that he'll ever wake up again, Sapnap becomes sure he doesn't like it.

"I'll check outside," Sapnap tells the other, making Dream look away from George. His eyes glint in the candlelight, and Sapnap swallows, turning away as he heads to the door. When he pokes his head out, he sees no threat, despite the sun being down, so he makes his careful way out of the hut.

He gives a small grunt when he lands on the ground in front of the hut, the impact worse than it should be because of how tired he is. Nevertheless, he continues the search. It is when he's starting to fear that he's walked too far that Sapnap smells sulphur and burning. Dream had killed the witch around here. Sapnap looks around, though the swamp is full of shadows that stretch endlessly no matter which way he looks, even with the dim light coming from the hut, even with the pale moonlight that tries to break through the trees.

Despite this, he pushes forward, reaching out to see if he can feel anything the witch might've dropped that Dream didn't pick up. With the way Dream had been when he reached Sapnap, he doubts Dream picked anything up at all.

Sapnap pauses. Dream is usually the type to roll with the punches, his brain faster than anyone's Sapnap has ever met, having solved the problem before he's even faced it—a quality Sapnap has always admired him for. He'd never throw it all out if he weren't truly afraid. Sapnap's hand catches on something lodged in the mud. He gives a tug.

A notebook, muddied, maybe, likely, probably illegible. But a notebook no less.

He's quick to get back to the hut.

When he gets back inside, it's to find Dream sitting with his back against the wall, the window with the flower pot above his head. He's got his eyes shut, but Sapnap spies his sword flat on the ground next to him, his hand covering the hilt, ready to wrap around it and spring into action if necessary.

"I found it," Sapnap says. "You really weren't thinking today, huh?" It's supposed to be a joke,

meant to lighten the mood, but it falls flat as he tosses Dream, who's now got his eyes open and on him, the notebook.

"Didn't know what to do," Dream replies. "Thanks, man."

"It's fine. It's George," he says. "I'd do it for you too."

To that, Dream just hums, working on peeling the pages apart.

"So?" Sapnap asks when a minute has passed and Dream has managed to flip through most of it. "Anything?"

Dream begins to shake his head, and Sapnap's hands curl into fists at his side, anger rising in him—at Dream, for being so reckless; at the witch, for doing this to George; at himself, for not stopping them; at *George*, for being the one to suggest such a stupid thing anyway—the anger turns to hate at the last one. But this time, it's all directed at himself. He's ready for... *something*, a fight, a rest, a fucking *break*, maybe, but then Dream gives a shout, and Sapnap turns to him faster than lightning.

"What is it?" he asks.

Dream shoves the notebook out towards him, and Sapnap steps around George to take it from him, moving closer to the candlelight to better see what's written.

 $Base + [Ghast\ tear + Phantom\ membrane + Blaze\ Powder] = RETUVELO$ 

Underneath that, there's something else, but even with the lamp right there, it's still hard to read.

Sapnap frowns. "Uh... great. But what is ree-tuh-velo?"

Dream gives a shrug, though it's distracted, and Sapnap allows himself a smile hidden behind the notebook. Distracted is good. Distracted means he's thinking. Distracted means he's thinking the way he normally does.

"A Ghast tear added is regeneration," he says, making Sapnap lower the notebook. "Membrane, slows down falling."

"Blaze powder is strength."

"So what do those combined do?" Dream asks it aloud, but Sapnap knows he's talking more to himself than him.

That doesn't mean Sapnap doesn't have an idea though. "Well," he says, "the Ghast tear might be what makes him... like this," he gives a pathetic wave towards George. Dream nods, fingers drumming against the floor.

"What about the strength? When he wakes up will he be like a golem or something?" Dream's got his eyes locked on George's face now, staring at it like it'll somehow hold the answers.

"He doesn't *look* any stronger," Sapnap says. He chews his lip before looking at the notebook again. "Were you able to read whatever is underneath that? What if it's like... some fine print?" At Dream's furrowed brow, Sapnap hands the notebook back to him.

"I tried, but...," he holds up the notebook, making a sputtering noise, lips pursed, cheeks puffed. It'd be funny if it weren't so pathetic.

"Give me that," Sapnap orders, taking the notebook back, sick of not having anything. Even with the recipe, it's like they're no closer than they were an hour ago. He holds it as close as he can to the flames without it burning and squints, doing his best to read the words. Then his eyes drift back up to the name of the potion, and he gives it another good stare, and then he looks at the ingredients, and looks at the name, and the ingredients, and then he looks over his shoulder at Dream and George, then he looks at the page as a whole, and oh.

Oh.

"So...," Sapnap says, "I think I know what the problem is. And also that that witch is braver than all three of us combined. It was still fighting a losing battle, though. And it lost. I guess we're just that good." He gives the notebook back to Dream. After he does, he makes his way over to Dream under the pretence of looking out the window. When he turns around to lean against the wall, standing while Dream is sitting, he glances down at the other. "You can thank me later for this, by the way. You're going to hate me at first, though."

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"Why?" Dream asks. "What're you—"
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Sapnap puts his hand on the other's head.

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"Dude, stop. What the f—"
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"Only know that I'm doing this because I care deeply about you both, and that I think this will be better for all of us. Also, I'm doing this because if I tell you to, you'll say no."

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"Do what?"
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"Dream," Sapnap says, "kiss him."

"What? No!"

"See?" Sapnap cries. "I knew you'd say that."

"He's unconscious, man! That's weird."

"I should've gone with my original plan," Sapnap mutters. "Okay, then I'll do—

"Your *original* plan?" Dream stares up at Sapnap with wide eyes. "Dude, what are you thinking? And, wait, don't get closer, stop!" Sapnap, who had gotten on his knees to sit next to George, moves in closer, glancing at Dream innocently. "No," Dream says. "Whatever. Fine. I'll do it."

Sapnap bites back the *yes* he wants to give, instead simply scooting back so Dream can instead be the one to hover over George. He's sure Dream's about to do it, their faces barely an inch apart, when Dream sits back up and looks over at Sapnap.

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"Why?"
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Sapnap holds back a groan. "Because it's the only way to wake him up, idiot!" He stretches to get the notebook off where he left it on the table. He points at *RETUVELO*. "True love!"

Dream gives him an incredulous look. "How do you know?"

"Okay," Sapnap begins, and Dream straightens, "look. No. I know what I'm talking about. At first, I wasn't sure, yeah, but then I saw 'reciprocated,' see?" He points at one of the words beneath the recipe. "Here. And it, like, clicked."

"You were going to kiss him," Dream says, accusatory.

Sapnap could bang his head on the table then and there. Maybe the cauldron, even. "Because I know it'd make you do it instead! I love George, but not like that!"

"Then how'd you know I—"

They stare at each other, Dream's hands have come up to cover his mouth.

"Ignoring the fact that I've known you eight years," Sapnap says, the bitterness in his words (mostly) playful, "it's kind of obvious. Your mask came off and you didn't even care."

"You've seen my face," Dream replies, as if he hadn't put the mask on one day and just... never took it off. As if the one time Sapnap saw him without it after that moment Dream hadn't immediately slapped it back up against his face until Sapnap turned back around.

"You didn't think, man," Sapnap says.

"I thought my friend had died!" Dream argues.

"Uh-huh," Sapnap says, "like you'd be half as frantic if it were me."

"I would," Dream frowns, "seriously. I love you too, man."

"Not the way you love George," Sapnap sing-songs. And then he gets tired of this because the information given on the potion was still really bare bones so for all they know George could actually be actively dying and not just... in a coma. "Just... don't believe me? Fine. Do it and prove me wrong."

Dream stares at Sapnap, gaze piercing even in the dim candlelight. Sapnap stares back, refusing to back down on this. He's had his dumb moments, sure, but this is one thing he's certain of. Not to mention (and not to brag), but Sapnap has always been the best out of all of them with the potions. Just saying.

"Fine," Dream says, and then he's ducking down to press perhaps the *most* pathetic kiss Sapnap has ever seen onto George's lips, sitting back up less than a second later, eyes wild, cheeks flushed in a way Sapnap's never gotten to see with the way he's always wearing his mask. "There," he continues, "I did it." And then he looks at Sapnap, almost smugly, which is funny because that means he'd be smug about not curing George.

And then George gasps.

"You've got to be joking me," Dream groans, while Sapnap lets out a *yes!* that was probably most definitely louder than necessary.

"I told you," Sapnap says. "I told you."

"Told him what?" George's voice is hoarse, and he winces with every word.

"Don't worry about it," Dream snaps before Sapnap can get a word in. "How're you feeling?"

"Like I've fallen down a ravine," George replies, not even trying to get off the ground. Granted, there's nowhere much else he could go. Not while it's night and he's still weak from the potion. Dream feels round his pockets then, and both Sapnap and George watch as he pulls out a new potion, one that glows a hot pink.

"The witch dropped it," he says. "Here."

When George doesn't take the potion, Sapnap is about to take it from him, but then both he and Dream seem to realize why he's not taking it.

"Your mask," George says. It comes out like a whisper. Sapnap looks over Dream's head out the window. It's night, sure, but it'll be morning soon. The shadows dance on the wall as George places a hand on Dream's face; Sapnap considers sitting out on the porch. "Should've kept it on," George suddenly continues. "You look like trash."

"Oh my god, shut up." George's hand falls from Dream's face as Dream ducks his head to laugh. George is smiling as he finally takes the potion. Sapnap steadies him when he tries to sit up to take it.

"I tried it on you earlier," Dream admits. "It didn't work."

George is slightly flushed with the effects of the potion working their way through him, and his eyes are bright even in the darkness as he looks up at Dream, who's still hovering just slightly over him. "What was that stuff?"

Dream looks over at Sapnap, who looks back before dropping his gaze to George. He still feels Dream's eyes on him, but he doesn't say anything. What can he even say? The truth will have to come out some time, but it shouldn't be him to say it.

"Potion," he says anyway, just to... get the ball rolling, that's all. "Something new."

"When I killed the witch," Dream continues, "it dropped a healing potion. I managed to catch it and come back, see if it worked, before going to get Sap."

"It didn't work," George repeats.

"You were out cold," Dream replies. "Sapnap thought you died."

"For, like, a second," Sapnap cuts in, leaning back on his heels and crossing his arms. "It's a fair assumption. You were just... laying there."

"I was unconscious!" George replies. "I can't exactly get comfortable." His voice is still scratchy, though less so. Even then, Sapnap's hand is back on George's shoulder, and Dream is reaching for the potion, though George shrugs off Sapnap's hand and smacks away Dream's. "M fine." He takes a breath then sits up properly, the shadows on his face changing as he moves, though his eyes still shine from the potion. "Is the potion all it dropped?" he asks Dream.

Sapnap should go now. He really should go now.

"A notebook," Dream answers. "Sapnap went back and found it."

"You didn't get it right away? I could've been awake a lot sooner!"

"You're awake now," Dream snaps back, brow furrowing, "isn't that enough?"

"I was in fucking limbo, man!"

"You—"

George glares at Dream, and Sapnap bites back a laugh. "I'm the one who was unconscious, *me*, so don't even—," and then his free hand comes up to his face and his eyes widen as when they touch

the skin beneath his eyes and not the plastic of his sunglasses.

Sapnap shakes his head as he picks up George's glasses and hands them to him. "They're probably all scratched up now," he tells the other. "Sorry, dude."

"It's," George slides them on, "whatever. Thanks."

Sapnap gives him a smile before glancing back out the window, where it's definitely either close to sunrise or the sun is already over the horizon. He pushes himself up off the ground. "Well, I'm going to go look for something we can eat. Don't forget to tell him about ree-tuh-velo, Dream." Because knowing them, they'd probably get distracted and end up having *that* conversation when Sapnap is in a room with them with no quick escape route. At least now he has the excuse of doing something. He gives the pair a wave as he heads out the door, not bothering to look back and instead looking out into the swamp, hoping for just about anything other than mushrooms.

By the time he's done, he is covered in a new layer of mud, though he's got a bucket of clean water with him to wash that off this time, and the mess is worth it, if the raw pork he carries with him is anything to go by. When he reaches the foot of the hut, he pauses at the sound of voices.

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"... was a dud," George is saying. "It can't detect emotion."
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"That's not true and you know it," Dream replies. "I tried the healing potion on you at first, and absolutely nothing happened."

"Because that reh-too-velo shit overpowered it!" George argues.

"You saw the recipe!" The sound of paper. Sapnap leans against one of the posts holding the hut up. "None of that stuff should've hurt you."

A pause.

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"Why can't you just admit it?"
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"Dream, what—"
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Sapnap looks at the cloth he wrapped the pork in. He'll need to start a fire. Best not to do it in a wooden hut. He focuses on Dream and George's conversation one more time. Just to be safe.

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"—you!"

"Since when?"

"Since—I don't know! I just kind of... noticed!"

"Like I believe that—"

"Well, what about you?"

"I—"
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Setting the bucket down then readjusting his grip on the pork, Sapnap moves away from the post, deciding to find somewhere else to start a fire. Hopefully they'll have figured it all out before he

<sup>&</sup>quot;Because it's not true."

<sup>&</sup>quot;On your side maybe."

gets back.

Returning to the hut what should be a conversation later with cooked pork chops, Sapnap is happy to find his bucket has remained untouched, and he sets it up onto the porch before following.

"Hey, guys," he says as he enters, showing off the pork, "I got food."

"You didn't mention Dream having to kiss me!" George immediately shouts, near causing Sapnap to drop the pork.

"Uh," he says, and then, "nope. Figured it'd be better if he did. Since he's the one that... y'know. Kissed you and all."

"I can't believe this," George says, though he accepts the pork chop Sapnap offers him.

"He wouldn't have had to if y'all had just listened to me," Sapnap replies, unable to help it. He's right, anyway. They could have avoided this whole fiasco if Dream and George had just... not gone to the witch's hut. Simple as.

"Dude," Dream says.

"Like you were going to confess anytime soon." Sapnap raises his brows as he takes a bite of his own pork chop. Dream makes a face and that's when Sapnap realizes—"You're still not wearing your mask."

Dream looks down to where it's still stuffed in his pocket. He gives a shrug. "Don't really need it right now."

Sapnap takes another bite of his pork chop before leaning his head back against the wall. "Guess not." And then he muffles a laugh behind another bite. "So does this mean I need to look for another room when we stay in villages?"

"Oh my God," Dream laughs while George just throws his hands in the air, "I didn't even say anything!"

"Didn't even have to," Sapnap replies. "I'm just that good." And also he's willing to eavesdrop just a little. But still. Considering he's the one who figured out the Retuvelo potion, he's pretty good.

"But seriously. Am I going to have to stay in another room?"

### **End Notes**

be i'm annoying & my greatest critic, i'm going to point out some of the ooc aspects be i'm tiny stupid brain

- 1) the thing that got them in trouble in the first place would george actually be like "oh look there's this thing let's go visit it even tho it's out of the way and puts us in danger?" imo no BUT i do think dream and george are two halves of a whole idiot so there's that
- 2) them leaving sapnap behind the way that they do, again wtf i think they'd be prone to doing that but before they'd get there they'd be like "hey, wtf, where's sap??" n go back

- 3) genuinely don't know if dream overreacted or not be this is realistic and like he knows george isn't dead but also.. george wasn't waking up sooo yeah idk dream's character at all or george's or sap's.... it's a struggle
- 4) despite shipping them in literally every combination possible i caNNOT write these boys & romance like,,,i can imagine it just fine, but when it comes to transferring thoughts onto .. screen,,, that shit's hard bruh
- 5) also this needs better bants.. there are some good ones imo but some is not what gets good reviews, at most it gets you like... maybe a sympathy kudos from your friend:/ so like.. didn't like the bants here lol

okay i'm simply gonna go stew over how terrible and challenging characterization is then see if i can crank out a chapter 2 of chh that i'm actually happy with, see y'all in george's stream @ 3pm ct today!! also i haven't seen the analysis vid of the rematch but i'm gonna watch that too later maybe idk i'll let y'all know so we can talk abt it more uwu

Please <u>drop by the archive and comment</u> to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!